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Iraq proves it:
Military needs better intel
By STEVE ISRAEL & ROBERT SCALES
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The dramatic fall of Baghdad after only three weeks of combat and the stubborn insurgency that has followed reveal both the benefits and limits of advanced military technology.

It took more than nine months, thousands of hours of intelligence work and 600 soldiers acting on a tip before a lone soldier using a spade finally was able to find Saddam Hussein sitting in a hole.

A returning commander from the 3rd Infantry Division observed: "I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness. I knew where every enemy tank was dug in on the outskirts of Tallil. Only problem was, my soldiers had to fight fanatics charging on foot or in pickups and firing AK-47s and RPGs [rocket-propelled grenades]. Great technical intelligence. Wrong enemy."

While the brilliant speed with which our forces toppled the regime demonstrates the unrivaled technological and professional superiority of our military, the current situation on the ground would seem to suggest we haven't given enough attention to the lessons of military history and intelligence about the state of mind of our adversaries.

Clearly, we must be concerned not just with an enemy's firepower but his willpower; not just his inferiority but also his ability to adapt to our superiority and how far he is willing to go to break our will. This is true human intelligence.

This is not something that should surprise us. Since 1948, Middle Eastern states are 0-7 in conventional combat against the U.S. and Israel. But in unconventional wars, they are 5-0. Enemies adapt, and will continue to adapt, as it becomes apparent to them that success comes with the ability to harness cultural antipathy to kill Americans.

This means that instead of solely increasing defense spending in pursuit of what's called weapons transformation, we also need to invest in the *cognitive* transformation of our military.

Defense planners, battlefield commanders and laptop warriors must be proficient not only at reading technical plans but also at understanding human intelligence in its most primitive form.

War is a thinking person's game. We must continue to give our forces the best technology to complete their missions safely and successfully. But perhaps some of that money could be better spent improving how our military learns about war.

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